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CONTENTS

Page

PART I PROCEEDINGS OF THE FOURTH REGIONAL ASIAN MEETING FOR THE UNCCD FOCAL POINTS IN ASIA
Ulan Bator, Mongolia 24-27 June 2001 2

Chairman's summary 2
Annex I - Highlight of the national level activities in Asia 9
Annex II - Programme of work 14
Annex III - List of participants 16

PART II PROCEEDINGS OF THE PACIFIC ISLAND SUBREGIONAL WORKSHOP ON MITIGATING DROUGHT AND COMBATING DESERTIFICATION
Apia, Samoa, 21-23 May 2001 23

PART III PACIFIC ISLAND SUBREGIONAL WORKSHOP ON INTEGRATION OF PRIORITY ACTIVITIES RELATED TO MITIGATING DROUGHT AND COMBATING LAND DEGRADATION IN THE ACP-EU PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT
Apia, Samoa, 24-25 May 2001 33

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PART I

PROCEEDINGS OF THE FOURTH REGIONAL ASIAN MEETING FOR THE UNCCD FOCAL POINTS IN ASIA

Ulan Bator, Mongolia, 26-27 June 2001

CHAIRMAN'S SUMMARY

A. PROCEEDINGS

The fourth Regional Meeting of UNCCD focal points in Asia was held in Ulan Bator, Mongolia from 26 to 27 June 2001. The participants thanked the Government of Mongolia for graciously hosting the meeting that was organized by the UNCCD secretariat. The Governments of Japan, Germany and U.S.A. co-sponsored the meeting to which the participants expressed their gratitude. Fifty people attended the meeting including the government representatives, thematic programme network (TPN) task managers, international/regional/subregional organization representatives and NGO representatives (the list of the participants is annexed). As was the case in the previous focal points meetings in Ohtsu, Japan, in 1998, in Beijing, China, in 1999 and in Bangkok, Thailand, in 2000, the focal points took stock of the progress and charted course for further actions.

At the opening session, Dr. Z. Batjargal, Director-General, National Agency for Meteorology, Hydrology and Environment Monitoring and President of the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the UNCCD made opening remarks on behalf of H.E. Mr. Ulambayar Barsbold, Minister for Nature and Environment of Mongolia stressing the importance of regional collaboration in Asia to facilitate the UNCCD implementation.

Mr. Hama Arba Diallo, Executive Secretary of the UNCCD secretariat, also made opening remarks highlighting the elements that are crucial in promoting the UNCCD implementation at the national, subregional and regional levels and referring to the issues such as the NAP implementation process, TPNs, early warning systems and capacity building.

The participants of the meeting elected Mr. Davlatsho Gulmakhmadov, Minister, State Committee for Land Management, Tajikistan as Chairman, Mr. Hardjono, Chief, Multilateral Cooperation Division, Bureau of International Cooperation and Investment, Ministry of Forestry, Indonesia as Vice-Chairman and Ms. Afraa Nouh, Ministry of State for Environmental Affairs, Syria as Rapporteur.

Having reviewed the issues related to the UNCCD implementation at the national, subregional and regional levels in Asia, the participants agreed to adopt the following text as the Chairman's Summary that reflects the thrust of the discussions at the meeting. The contained recommendations, however, do not necessarily reflect consensus of the participants. The highlight of the national level implementation of the UNCCD that was presented in session 1 is also herewith annexed for reference.

B. SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. CCD implementation at the national level

(a) NAP formulation and implementation

While a great deal of progress was reported in the national reports on the UNCCD implementation at the Ad Hoc Working Group on the review of the Convention implementation, Asian countries must make further efforts to advance the NAP formulation and implementation process. In response to the call made by a number of countries for catalytic support to such a process, the UNCCD secretariat and the Global Mechanism should support the countries concerned in this respect at the same time pursuing possible partnership building with donor countries/agencies and other partners.

The UNCCD secretariat and the Global Mechanism should also support the countries that have adopted the NAP in pursuing the measures for effective NAP implementation. It could be worth considering in formulating a guideline or a handbook on the NAP implementation.

Monitoring of partnership building should be systematic. It is proposed to organize a contact group meeting in the respective countries to review the progress made in the implementation of partnership arrangements including the support to the pilot programmes or projects at the field level as a follow-up action to the organization of the national forum on partnership building for the UNCCD implementation.

(b) Mainstreaming the activities to combat desertification into the national agenda

As reiterated at the past focal points meetings as well as the Ad Hoc Working Group on the review of the Convention implementation, the activities to combat desertification should be mainstreamed in the national policies for promoting environmental protection and sustainable development. Further efforts need to be made to link the interests of policy makers with the interests of the local people who remain vulnerable to desertification. The support of international partners would assist the NFP in this respect.

(c) Policy linkages

It is essential to pursue linkages between combating desertification and other multiple objectives such as creating income generating opportunities, eradicating poverty, conserving biodiversity, mitigating pressure for adverse impacts of climate change at the policy making level as well as community/field level. The secretariat should receive the required support to assist Parties in the development of appropriate methodologies and for capacity building.

(d) National level coordination

While many countries have established or have been considering the establishment of the national coordinating bodies, the national level coordination across the line-ministries and related institutes/partner NGOs continues to be perceived as a crucial challenge in facilitating the effective UNCCD implementation in respective countries. Limited institutional capacities of the UNCCD focal ministries as focal points seem to prevent focal points in some countries from performing their desired roles in promoting the UNCCD implementation. So as to enhance the impacts of the activities to combat desertification, greater efforts must be made to promote closer collaboration and coordination between government bodies and relevant institutions including those that promote policy formulation as well as technical agencies that carry out field projects.

(e) Resource mobilization

The Asian focal points are willing to cooperate with Parties of other regions to identify responses to the shortcomings and challenges of the UNCCD process and to adopt at the forthcoming session of the Conference of the Parties (COP5) a set of decisions that would pave the way for substantive progress in the UNCCD implementation process, through the establishment of a predictable country driven consultative mechanism that would lead to necessary partnership building and arrangements, as advocated by the provisions of the Regional Implementation Annex for Asia.

While recognizing the difficulties that they still encounter in mainstreaming the Convention and NAP implementation and in bringing such difficulties to the attention of the international community at the appropriate high policy level through established channels of communications with donor countries and agencies, the national focal points of affected countries point out that more awareness and responsiveness of the developed country parties representatives stationed in the affected developing countries would be a great help in enhancing the momentum of supporting the UNCCD implementation process and linking the views at the field with the decision-making at the governments of the developed countries or the headquarters of aid agencies.

A number of countries are interested in pursuing the organization of the round table type of meeting for promoting the UNCCD implementation in the light of the step wise progress that was made by China in organizing the Coordination Meeting held in Beijing, China, in June 2001. They expressed their wish that they would receive catalytic technical and financial assistance from the UNCCD secretariat and the GM in this respect. It is also suggested that the GM and the UNCCD secretariat bring to the attention of the UNCCD focal points in donor countries the significant of the partnership building with a view to facilitating resource mobilization for the UNCCD implementation. It is important to take into account generic and peculiar conditions of the respective countries in planning such a consultative meeting so as to effectively achieve the objectives of such a consultative process.

2. Asian regional thematic programme networks

(a) Thematic programme networks

Clear progress has been achieved in developing and implementing thematic programme networks (TPNs) that constitute the regional action programme for combating desertification and mitigating the effects of drought in Asia. While acknowledging a great deal of efforts that were made by TPN host countries and task managers in mobilizing necessary support for the TPN preparation and implementation, TPN host countries and task managers in collaboration with the UNCCD secretariat and the GM are encouraged to strive to mobilize further financial and human resources.

They are required to develop and further elaborate the programmes in the spirit of facilitating a broad-based involvement of all TPN member countries and institutions in the region and to welcome interests from institutions in developed country Parties. It was stressed that, in order to strengthen institutional capacities of TPN host institutes and members and carry out identified programme activities, an access to catalytic financial support should be essential.

The development of effective networking at the regional level should remain a priority objective of TPNs. It remains essential to pursue the achievement of the concrete objectives under the TPNs and demonstrate such results, as support to NAP activities, on a regular basis. The exchanges of inputs and feedbacks under the TPNs would help bolstering the regional network and drawing further support from donor countries and agencies.

The call is reiterated for the developed country Parties, multilateral and bilateral organizations, the Global Mechanism and the UNCCD secretariat to ensure the sustainability of regional cooperation under TPNs for Asia through appropriate levels of support.

As additional TPNs are being developed and launched, it is essential to promote collaboration between TPN task mangers and with relevant areas and networks of subregional action programmes in particular through TPN information networks. There would be a merit in pursuing the harmonized approaches to developing various TPNs and it would be useful to review the TPNs on a regular basis at the regional meetings in the form of focal point meetings or the regional group meetings during the COPs.

(b) TPN1 (desertification monitoring and assessment)

So as to support the effective planning on combating desertification, tackling land degradation and promoting sustainable land use, desertification monitoring and assessment that shall be promoted under the TPN1 deserves appropriate attention. The UNCCD secretariat and the international community shall assist TPN1 Task Manager in carrying out activities to enhance the network members' national capacities of undertaking land use monitoring and assessment and at the same time facilitate transboundary, subregional and regional response to exacerbating desertification and land degradation beyond national boundaries.

(c) TPN2 (agroforestry and soil conservation in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas)

In order to support agroforestry and soil conservation in the region, the TPN2 shall develop on the existing national networks and seek to establish links with partner institutions. The TPN2 Task Manager shall also promote exchanges of information on best practices in the network member countries in order to effectively tackle the issue of land degradation.

(d) TPN3 (rangeland management and sand dune fixation)

Iran hosted the TPN3 launch meeting in Yazd, Iran, in May 2001 with the support of the Japanese Government and IFAD. The network members identified the priority programme activities. The Government of Iran also pledged its financial support to the TPN3 activities at the level of US$ 140,000 annually over the next five years.

(e) TPN4 (water resource management for dry land agriculture)

The substantive preparation has been carried out toward developing the TPN4 and is organizing its launch meeting later this year. The TPN4 Task Manager is also designated within the Ministry of Irrigation, Syria. Questionnaires are also distributed and collected and their responses were already analysed.

(f) TPN5 (capacity building for combating desertification and mitigating the effects of drought)

The outline of the TPN5 was already prepared with the detailed proposals for programme activities. Questionnaires shall be also prepared shortly. Mongolia requests the UNCCD secretariat to support the preparation of the TPN5 and facilitate the organization of its launch meeting as early as the next year.

(g) Regional coordination unit (RCU)

Reference was made to the important role that the regional coordination unit for Asia is based in Bangkok. Proposals were made to strengthen the capacities of the RCU for Asia. It is understood that the matter related to the RCUs have been subject to the official discussions at the COP. The point was made that the Asian regional coordination unit of UNCCD, in close partnership with ESCAP, UNEP and regional and subregional organizations, can bring a positive contribution to the further integration of regional environmental policies.

3. UNCCD implementation at the subregional level

(a) Central Asia

Subregional collaboration has been promoted to tackle land degradation and foster sustainable management of natural resources. Within frames of the subregional action programme to combat desertification in Aral Sea Basin, the five priority areas of cooperation have been identified and the process of pilot projects development has started. A working group of the UNCCD focal points that was established as a subregional coordinating body should enhance coordination of related activities at the subregional level.

(b) West Asia

As part of the subregional action programme for combating desertification for West Asia, two thematic networks on water resource management (TN1) and vegetation cover sustainable development (TN2) have been promoted. The project proposals have been prepared by ICARDA and ACSAD concerning the implementation of TPNs and TNs in the concerned countries. These proposals are now with the GM for mobilizing resources. The implementation of TNs should be facilitated in a manner to create synergies with Asian TPNs and to catalyse further actions at the national level.

(c) Pacific Islands

The two consecutive workshops which were held in Apia, Samoa, from 21 to 25 May 2001, set out a useful basis for promoting subregional collaboration. Concrete actions should be taken to develop initiatives on agroforestry and water harvesting as well as early warning systems for drought in Pacific Islands.

(d) South East Asia

South East Asian countries find a great deal of merits in addressing land degradation issues and promoting mutual learning process for facilitating the UNCCD implementation at the subregional level. It is suggested to convene a subregional workshop in Indonesia to be facilitated by the UNCCD secretariat to facilitate this process.

(d) North East Asia

As increasing attention has been given to sand particles such as dust storms and yellow sand issues in North East Asia or even the Northern Pacific region, it is suggested to organize an international workshop with interested parties and international organizations and make use of TPN1 and TPN3 activities to review the status of yellow sand/dust storms and their impacts and explore effective measures for arresting such phenomena through enhancing national, subregional, regional and international efforts to combat desertification.

(e) South Asia

South Asia is comprised of large deserted areas and is the most densely populated region in the world with some of the world's poorest people. The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and the South Asian Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP) do serve he purpose of regional cooperation in general environment issues but do not cover desertification specifically. It would be appropriate to consider the possibility of constituting a mechanism in South Asia to deliberate on issues to combat desertification.

4. UNCCD implementation at the global level

(a) Awareness raising

In conformity with the recommendation 2.13 of the Third Asia-Africa Forum regarding the selection of a specific theme to bring greater focus on the commemoration of the World Day on Combating Desertification, the Chairman of the Asia Group is invited to submit for consideration at the COP 5 a proposal for adopting a recommendation and selecting a theme such as "Sand storms and mankind" or "land degradation in mountains" as a specific theme for the commemoration of the World Day on Combating Desertification on 17th June 2002.

5. Asia-Africa collaboration

The participants endorsed the Chairman's Summary of the Third Asia-Africa Forum and reiterated their wish that the Summary shall be brought to the attention of wide-ranging policy makers and stakeholders so as to pursue the effective measures for materializing recommendations proposed at the Third Asia-Africa Forum.

Annex I

HIGHLIGHT OF THE NATIONAL LEVEL ACTIVITIES IN ASIA

Bangladesh Promoting public awareness, integrated ecosystem management, consideration is currently given to establishing coordination and steering bodies for the UNCCD implementation. Monitoring and assessment of aridity in the countries is needed that is a complicated process. Technical and financial assistance is required. The UNCCD secretariat should be empowered to better assist the affected UNCCD member countries.

Cambodia Line ministries promote coordination in the areas of combating desertification and land degradation. It is proposed to convene a national workshop on combating land degradation and mitigating the effects of drought aimed at facilitating the formulation of the NAP that is postponed from June to late summer this year. It is hoped that the UNCCD secretariat and the GM could provide Cambodia with catalytic assistance.

China Two key field projects of combating desertification was initiated, including the Desertification Control Programme around the Beijing Area, and the Fourth Phase of the Three-North Shelterbelts Project. The drafted State Law of Controlling and Combating Desertification has been submitted to the National People's Congress. Hopefully it will be ratified in the near future. Carrying out activities to commemorate the World Day on Combating Desertification that is 17 June with a wide range of media coverage. A publication was recently released on modalities, science and technologies on combating desertification. The Coordination Meeting was hosted by the China State Forestry Administration in Beijing on 6 and 7 June 2001 with co-sponsorship with the GM, the UNCCD, the UNDP and the Asian Development Bank focusing on resource mobilization, partnership building and linkages between combating desertification and ameliorating the people's livelihood. China suggests that further support shall be provided to promote the amending and implementing of the NAP. The UNCCD secretariat and the GM should continue to promote coordination to implement the actions recommended by the Coordination Meeting. North East Asia collaboration has been becoming important to take actions to study transboundary phenomena of sand storms/dust storms. It is suggested that the TPN1 should undertake the task. Proper recognition should be also paid to the important role that the UNCCD Regional Coordination Unit for Asia based in Bangkok.

Mongolia The outcome of the Mongolia National Forum on Combating Desertification and Promoting Synergistic Implementation of Multilateral Interlinked Convention held from 18 to 20 June in Ulan Bator was presented at the Third Asia-Africa Forum. Twenty laws and national programmes were formulated and place in implementation that are expected to strengthen the efforts to facilitate the implementation of the national plan of action to combat desertification in Mongolia. It is important to promote the activities to combat desertification together with the proper pasture and livestock management. Capacity building in a variety of areas remains essential.

India Land degradation is a primary concern for India. India assumes the responsibilities of the TPN2 host country and remains active in other TPNs such as TPN1. The national coordinating committee was set up and is composed of in-line ministries representatives that have been promoting the formulation of the national action programme to combat desertification. The committee does not have its autonomous budget, but shall oversee the finalization and implementation of the NAP. The volume 1 shall provide the framework and the volume 2 will contain a variety of priority project proposals. It is expected that the NAP shall be adopted and its adoption shall be announced at the COP 5.

Indonesia Indonesia has been promoting the implementation of relevant national policies to address land degradation and drought. Indonesia has been facilitating the preparation of the national action programme. Catalytic assistance is requested in this regard. Indonesia also find a great deal of merits in organizing a subregional workshop on the formulation of NAPs in Indonesia to enhance the harmonized approach in the formulation and implementation of the NAPs and to strengthen collaboration in the subregion. UNCCD reporting help guides could be improved taking into account the formats required for other related environmental conventions.

Iran Iran promotes activities to combat desertification. Awareness raising activities at all levels including political and community levels are part of the important activities. The DESCONAP Office, a regional network on combating desertification in Asia launched by ESCAP in 1990's has been playing a leading role in promoting desertification control activities. In Yazd, the Yazd International Center for Sustainable Development of Desert Communities (www.undp.org.ir/sep/yazd) is expected to promote sustainability in a dry land livelihood. Iran also supports the development of TPN3 activities. NGOs have been playing an important role in the desertification control activities. Iran should be able to contribute to training programmes including those relate to interregional collaboration.

Japan As a non-affected developed country, Japan has been supporting the activities to combat desertification through official development assistance, voluntary contributions to the UNCCD secretariat and scientific cooperation. Japan recently hosted the Ad Hoc Panel Meeting on Early Warning Systems. Japan continues to support the national and regional activities to facilitate the UNCCD implementation.

Jordan Jordan has been promoting the implementation of the UNCCD and other related environmental conventions such as the Convention on Biological Diversity. Jordan identified the priority activities for combating desertification. The Biodiversity Action Plan and the Economic Development Plan articulate their linkages with combating desertification. The NAP shall be implemented with the support of the GEF, UNDP, UNDP/UNSO Office in Beirut after signing project documents in this year.

Kazakhstan Kazakhstan has come to the final stage of preparing the NAP. It has been actively supporting the implementation of the subregional action programme for combating desertification in Aral See Basins. It expects to facilitate the NAP implementation and at the same time promote its involvement in the SRAP for Central Asia and TPNs for Asia.

Kyrgyzstan The NAP was prepared including 35 pilot project proposals submitted by various ministries and NGOs. Within the frames of the NAP, a project proposal on eco-tourism was prepared. The 2002 is designated as the Year of Mountains on initiatives of the President of Kyrgyzstan. It is proposed that the focal point of Kyrgystan shall be a contact person in the preparatory stage of the International Conference on Mountains' Problems to be held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, in 2002.

Lebanon NAP implementation is under way with the assistance of GTZ and UNSO/UNDP. The NAP preparation and adoption is currently of utmost importance. It intends to further develop partnership to facilitate the activities to combat desertification, tackle land degradation and promote sustainable use of land based resources.

Myanmar Land degradation has been exacerbating due to a variety of causes that include human induced causes such as inappropriate agriculture practices. Since 1904, the Government has been promoting reforestation programmes including dry zones. The Green Dry Zone Department has been playing an important roll in this respect. During 1997-98, intensive efforts have been made to promote nature reserves and water resource management. Myanmar intends to facilitate the NAP formulation that would include the concrete provisions for the Myanmar's participation in the TPNs.

Nepal Nepal promotes a participatory approach in the activities to combat desertification. Nepal plans to facilitate the formulation of the NAP by undertaking required assessment on land degradation and land use. Nepal conducts an assessment study on technical and financial gaps. Further attention shall be given to rehabilitating degraded land areas. Nepal requests the UNCCD secretariat and the GM to give due consideration to the Nepal's need for catalytic assistance in facilitating the NAP and promoting capacity building activities.

Pakistan 75% of the entire population has been affected by desertification and the affected population groups are often at an economically disadvantageous position. Pakistan pursues the implementation of the UNCCD for the benefit of the local population that are vulnerable to desertification. Salinization and drought also adversely affect the rural communities. Sustainable natural resource management remains a significant challenge for Pakistan. Pakistan completed the formulation of the NAP and the Environment Minister approved it. The Pakistan Environment Protection Council is expected to approve it in the next few months. The preparation of TPN6 has been delayed due to the other pressing requirements. Pakistan requests the UNCCD secretariat to assist Pakistan in preparing the TPN6.

Papua New Guinea PNG has diversified culture with many local languages and tribes. Copper, gold and oil mining are major sources of revenues. PNG does not have desert, but faces severe land degradation due to mining and logging. PNG plans to form a national coordination committee for the UNCCD implementation that will also consider the formulation of the NAP. Environmental Conservation Agency is responsible for the UNCCD implementation. PNG hopes to organize a national awareness seminar on the UNCCD and to receive assistance from the UNCCD secretariat for this purpose.

Republic of Korea ROK does not have desert and severe land degradation problems. ROK is, however, being affected by yellow sand and dust storms from neighbouring countries. ROK provides China and Mongolia with some assistance to promote reforestation and the activities to arrest sand dune movement.

Sri Lanka The National Committee of Experts on Land Degradation was established to examine the land use policies in Sri Lanka. Consideration is being given to the proposal of formulating a national policy for combating land degradation. Agroforestry, sustainable management of domesticated animals and water conservation are some of the key components that are deemed as essential for facilitating the national policy implementation to combat land degradation and promote sustainable land use. Awareness campaigns and study tours are organized. Financial and technical assistance is required in particular for the NAP preparation. Regional collaboration also remains important.

Under the activities of the projects of the national action plan to collaborate to combat desertification in Syria, awareness campaigns are undertaken. A draft national action plan that was formulated based on the inputs from experts is ready for review at the national level forum. Syria also regard as the TPN4 as an important activity to contribute to the regional efforts to combat desertification.

Turkmenistan The great magnitude of the population has been affected by desertification in the country. Turkmenistan has been moving forward to implement pilot projects to achieve concrete results in combating desertification.

Uzbekistan Uzbekistan is severely affected by desertification. It prepared its NAP for combating desertification and land degradation. Uzbekistan facilitates the implementation of the NAP that includes the improvement of water resource management. The projects have been financed by the government source of funding and have been successful. However, it requires further financial resources for this purpose.

Viet Nam The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development formulated the first draft of the NAP in June this year. With the support of Japan, Viet Nam intends to promote the implementation of the project to foster reforestation to arrest sand dune movement and biomass production. The Ministry of Agriculture also promotes partnership building within the country to support reforestation activities in the country.

Netherlands

Netherlands provides developing countries with assistance at the level of 0.8% of its GDP of which a significant part is spent to improve environmental protection. Efforts will be made to mainstream the activities to combat desertification in the development assistance programmes in a decentralized manner. Networks will have also be developed among institutes, scientists and stakeholders within the Netherlands as well as between the Office of Foreign Affairs and the Netherlands embassies in affected countries. Netherlands intends to conclude agreements with the secretariats of UNCCD, UNFCCC and CBD to promote their synergistic implementation. Netherlands also works with the UNDP/UNSO in the areas of combating desertification.

NGO (EPF of Japan)

Limited public awareness on desertification and its impacts remains to be an obstacle in promoting activities to combat desertification. Environmental education and awareness raising campaigns are part of the responses that EPF contemplates to promote. EPF promotes personnel exchanges such as group leaders and teachers between Japan and the countries affected by desertification.

GM

The GM has been supporting activities at national, subregional and regional levels, particularly with the relation to partnership building and resource mobilisation. The GM is committed to working with all country Parties to the Convention, and as such is happy to continue its work with affected country Parties of the Asia region in facilitating the implementation of the Convention.

Annex II

PROGRAMME OF WORK

Tuesday, 26 June 2001

9:15 - 9:30	Registration
9:30 - 9:50	Opening session H.E. Mr. Ulambayar Barsbold, Minister of Nature and Environment, Mongolia Mr. Hama Arba Diallo, Executive Secretary, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
9:50 - 10:05	Break
10:05 - 12:30	Election of the Bureau Session 1 "UNCCD implementation in Asia" Overview by the UNCCD secretariat Brief updates on the UNCCD implementation by individual countries in Asia
12:30 - 14:00	Lunch
14:00 - 15:30	Session 2 "Asian Regional Thematic Programme Networks (TPNs)" Overview by the UNCCD secretariat Supplementary remarks in addition to the presentations made at the preceding Third Asia - Africa Forum TPN 1 (Desertification Monitoring and Assessment) by Ms. Yan Liu, TPN 1 Focal Point, Institute of Forest Resource Information Technologies, Chinese Academy of Forestry Highlights on monitoring and assessment presented at the Ad Hoc Working Group on the review of the Convention implementation by the UNCCD secretariat TPN 2 (Agroforestry and Soil Conservation) by Mr. R. K. Singh, Senior Scientist, Central Soil & Water Conservation, Research and Training Institute, Research Centre, India TPN 3 (Rangeland Management and Sand Dune Fixation) by Mr. Alireza Morshedi, UNCCD focal point, Forest and Range Organization, Iran TPN 4 (Water Resource Management for Dry Land Agriculture) by Mr. Jamal Jamaleddin, Ministry of Irrigation, Syria TPN 5 (Capacity Building for Combating Desertification and Mitigating the Effects of Drought) by Mr. Ts Adiyasuren, Counsellor and Adviser to the Minister of Nature and Environment, Mongolia

Brief discussions are foreseen after the respective presentations of each TPN.

15:30 - 15:45 Break

15:45 - 16:30 Session 3 "Subregional activities relevant to the UNCCD implementation"

Brief updates on SRAPs for Western Asia and Central Asia by representatives of countries in the respective subregions

Presentation on the outcomes of the South Pacific Island Workshops held in Samoa, by Mr. Godfried Angi, Project Coordinator, International Treaties and Conventions, Ministry of Environment and Conservation, Papua New Guinea

Discussions are foreseen after the respective presentations of each subregion

14:30 - 17:00 Session 4 "Interregional collaboration between Asia and Africa for combating desertification"

Introduction by the secretariat

Presentation by the Chairman of the Third Asia - Africa Forum on combating desertification by a representative of the Mongolian Government

Discussions

17:00 Adjournment

Wednesday, 27 June 2001

9:00 - 10:00 Session 5 "Preparation for COP 5"

Overview on the programme of work and documentation by the UNCCD secretariat

Discussions

10:00 - 10:40 Briefing session on GEF financing opportunities, presentation by Mr. Pak Sum Low, UNESCAP

10:40 - 10:55 Break

10:55 - 12:10 Session 6 "Adoption of the Chairman's Summary"

12:15 - 12:30 Concluding session
Closing remarks
Vote of thanks

12:30 Adjournment

Annex III

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PART II

PROCEEDINGS OF THE PACIFIC ISLAND SUBREGIONAL WORKSHOP ON MITIGATING DROUGHT AND COMBATING DESERTIFICATION Apia, Samoa, 21-23 May 2001

CHAIRMAN'S SUMMARY

Having assembled in Apia, Samoa, with 25 participants to attend the workshop including representatives of 10 Pacific island countries as indicated in the list of participants,

Having reviewed review the process of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in the context of priority issues such as mitigating the effects of drought, combating land degradation and promoting the sustainable use of land based resources in the South Pacific island countries,

Having elected Ms. Tania Temata, Senior Environment Officer, Environmental Services, Cook Islands, as Chairperson, Mr. Dennis Ivarami, Technical Officer, Ministry for Environment and Conservation, Papua New Guinea, as Vice Chairman, and Mr. Joel Sel, UNCCD focal point, Department of Land, Vanuatu, as Rapporteur,

Expressing appreciation to the Government of Japan for co-sponsoring the workshop and to the FAO subregional office for the South Pacific Islands and the UNDP Samoa office for their collaboration in the organiztion of the wrkshop, the participants agreed with the following text of the Chairperson's Summary.

1. Activities and their relevance to the Pacific island countries

The Pacific island states are on the forefront of countries affected by climatic variations and environmental degradation. They seek to discharge their obligations under Multilateral Environment Agreements within the constraints of their limited resources. The UNCCD secretariat presentations, covering regional and subregional activities in Asia, highlighted response strategies for combating land degradation, desertification and drought. Those countries that made presentations on their national reports at the Ad Hoc Working Group held in Bonn, Germany in March 2001 observed that the report preparation process contributed to promoting the implementation of the UNCCD and related national policies. It also facilitated inter-agency coordination within the government and the collection and analysis of data. The presentation of their national reports at this workshop raised issues found of common relevance for all participants. For these reasons, it was proposed that the UNCCD secretariat should further assist the Pacific island country Parties in preparing national reports if they have not yet done so.

The participants demonstrated strong interests for potential funding schemes for the UNCCD implementation and stressed the need for technical and financial support. The participants noted the ongoing activities of the Global Mechanism to facilitate resource mobilization for supporting the UNCCD implementation. At the same time, they were encouraged to learn of recent positive steps taken by the GEF Council to pursue the designation of "land degradation" as one of the focal areas under the Global Environment Facility (GEF). It was pointed out that the GEF is

not officially designated as a financing mechanism for the UNCCD, unlike the other Rio multilateral environmental conventions. Clarification was sought as to the process for pursuing the adoption of a statutory clause that would designate the GEF as an official financing mechanism to ensure access to GEF resources for the UNCCD process.

While Pacific islands called for catalytic support at national level to assist them in discharging their obligations under the UNCCD, they recognise the usefulness of exchange and cooperation between affected Parties. In this respect some linkages should be established with the Asian regional thematic programme networks (TPNs) which were deemed as useful models for pursuing subregional collaboration in the South Pacific. TPN1 on desertification monitoring and assessment was said to be of great relevance to drought forecasting, drought mitigation, land use monitoring, remote sensing and land use planning. TPN2 on agroforestry and soil conservation in dry land areas was also regarded as an interesting collaborative network for the Pacific island countries. It was suggested to pursue collaborative initiatives to address these issues in the context of the South Pacific subregion so as to carry out meaningful and cost-effective programmes

2. Assessment on drought, land degradation and policy responses

A sea level rise is not the only climatic induced threat of concerns to the Parties of the subregion. Drought has been hitting the subregion causing damage to water supply and food security systems. It occurs cyclically and the regularity of its occurrence requires the countries concerned to adopt drought mitigation measures including the development of early warning systems and water harvesting schemes. However, its occurrence is not at the frequency that keeps the countries continuously preparing for drought. Disruption of activities to enhance drought preparedness and the application of early warning systems often makes it difficult to respond in a timely and sufficient manner to reverting drought.

Population pressures increase demands for land conversion and lead to the cultivation of slopes and other marginal areas. The process has been causing land degradation through soil and water erosion. Inappropriate farming practices and draining of persistent organic pollutants have been exacerbating land degradation. Consideration needs to be given to making the operation of land tenure systems more conducive to sustainable use of land and prevention of land degradation. Lands owned by overseas residents are often converted to forms of land use that substantially reduce tree and vegetation covers. Increasing efforts have been made to implement environmental impact assessments prior to the initiation of the field works. These have been functioning as safety measures to restrain land conversion to non-sustainable and ecology-destructive use. Nevertheless the participants perceive the potential of the UNCCD to further strengthen legislation and practices more compatible with the objectives of mitigating drought and combating land degradation.

The countries have been strengthening the institutional set-up to effectively respond to the challenge of drought mitigation and land degradation control. Much remains to be done. The UNCCD implementation requires more integrated planning, the involvement of various government agencies and the mobilization of land users through a participatory process. Interdepartmental cooperation is called for in the light of the fact that drought mitigation and land degradation control involves a wide range of issues. The range of crosscutting issues that underline drought mitigation and land degradation control, must be addressed by a variety of national

and subregional bodies such as SPREP, SPC, the Forum Secretariat, FAO, UNDP, SOPAC, ESCAP, etc. and stake holders involved in UNCCD related activities. The involvement of multiple actors makes effective agency coordination at the same time imperative and difficult. Awareness raising and information exchanges are priorities.

3. Highlights and priority activities in the UNCCD implementation

Participants identified the need for progress in a number of critical areas. The following are highlighted as major challenges that remain to be priority activities in the UNCCD implementation. Substantive needs were identified for:

(a) Developing watershed management and water resource management measures to overcome the present shortcomings and deficiencies in water storage, irrigation, rain water harvesting, water catchment facilities, infrastructures and water supply and sanitation schemes;

(b) Strengthening institutional capacities of the government, research institutes and farmers' association, and building capacities of local and national stakeholders;

(c) Identifying and disseminating the technologies that are suitable and/or effective for promoting water catchment and natural resource management, with due attention to traditional knowledge and the transfer of appropriate technology;

(d) Enlarging the information network on drought mitigation and land degradation control measures across the islands; and

(e) Transboundary, subregional and regional collaboration in order to synchronise and upscale efforts to mitigate drought and combat land degradation.

4. Resource mobilisation and partnership arrangements

Resource mobilization remains a common challenge for the Pacific Island countries. The following are recommended actions for promoting the mobilization of financing and technical resources for the UNCCD implementation:

(a) Systematic identification of win-win options by linking drought mitigation and land degradation measures with those that can generate immediate income benefits to the local population such as agroforestry;

(b) Quantify the benefits of undertaking and implementing proper early warning systems and mitigating/preventive measures vis-à-vis the cost of restoring degraded areas and offsetting the negative impacts of drought and land degradation;

(c) Enhancing comprehensive approaches to address environment and sustainable development policy objectives through pursuing synergistic policy measures that would benefit the conservation of land based and marine biodiversity, the preservation of migratory species and the protection of wetland ecosystems;

(d) Defining counter-measures against drought as climate adaptation measures where feasible subject to bringing into force the Kyoto Protocol;

(e) Pursuing contacts with donor countries and agencies in parallel at both the national and subregional levels with a view to elicit a more decisive support to the efforts of the island states for the preparation of national reports on the UNCCD implementation and the launching of the initial steps of the NAP; and

(f) Identification of a subregional focal point for the UNCCD in this subregion to facilitate or coordinate the activities of the UNCCD.

Subregional activities

Subregional collaboration among island states is considered as a must as it has the potential to simultaneously promote the UNCCD implementation at the national and subregional levels. A request was made to the UNCCD secretariat to pursue modalities for supporting subregional initiatives in collaboration with its partner bodies and agencies. The following is highlighted as possible areas of collaboration in the Pacific:

(a) Organizing subregional workshops on formulation of field project proposals;

(b) Promoting subregional level approaches to resource mobilization and partnership arrangements;

(c) Undertaking subregional case study on agroforestry and water harvesting technologies and techniques.

(d) Facilitating collaboration with FAO, SPREP (South Pacific Regional Environment Programme), SPC (Secretariat of the Pacific Community)/Agroforestry Unit, the Forum Secretariat, UNDP, SOPAC (South Pacific Applied Geo-Science Commission), ESCAP and the Asian Productivity Center.

Annex I

Report
Working Group on Community Driven Integrated Management of Land Based Resources as Counter-measures against drought and land degradation
(Working Group 1)

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- **Introduction and assessments**

The participants highlighted the significance of drought, land degradation and their impacts and they stressed a great deal of needs to promote activities to mitigate the effects of drought, combat land degradation, increase land productivity and enhance land based natural resource management.

A number of initiatives, studies and assessments have been carried out at the national and subregional levels in the Pacific regarding agroforestry and water resource management as key measures to achieve the above-mentioned objectives. Some of those activities have been successful in ameliorating water catchment, water use efficiency and land productivity.

PACIFICLAND is one of such initiatives launched in 1991 to promote the application of technologies for improving land management involving Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Tonga. PACIFICLAND was concluded in June 1999 despite a need for further continuation and its reactivation would be called for in the UNCCD context.

The Pacific Regional Agriculture Programme is another example of the initiatives to promote agroforestry and agriculture in the South Pacific. It was carried from 1995 to 1999 and the countries that participated in the programme should document its further relevance to the Convention and pursue funding to continue the activities.

It is deemed essential to enhance the overall impacts of agroforestry and water harvesting measures as part of key elements for mitigating the effects of drought and combating land degradation. For this purpose, innovative perrpectives are required to merge conventional agroforestry and natural resource management with environment conservation measures such as reforestation, regeneration of drought affected and degraded land areas and prevention of soil erosion.

- **Proposed activities and suggested actions**

National level activities

The following elements are highlighted as areas where further intervention measures are required and deemed effective to achieve the targeted objectives.

1. Formulation of national action programmes to mitigate drought and combat land degradation building upon the existing policy instruments,

2. Strengthening and invigorating the implementation process of existing policy measures on land use and management,

3. Promotion of field project implementations addressing:

- Afforestation/reforestation
- Agroforestry
- Water catchment, water harvesting, rainwater harvesting
- Improvement of ground water resource use
- Soil conservation
- Land information system development
- Desalinization
- Creation of conservation areas
- Coastal protection
- Dissemination of information and techniques
- Capacity building
- Improving the application of drought forecasting and early warning systems

Subregional activities

1. Subregional workshop on formulation of field project proposals

2. There are a considerable number of field project proposals that have been already formulated, but have not yet received any funding. It was pointed out that such proposals need to be refined reflecting innovative perspectives to maximize their potential benefits and the scope of beneficiaries. For this reason, it was proposed to convene subregional workshops so as to enable national stakeholders to formulate project proposals in a way to be qualified for funding by donor countries and agencies.

3. Subregional case study on agroforestry and water harvesting technologies and techniques

Many of the Pacific island countries have been implementing agroforestry and water harvesting that have been effective in enhancing drought preparedness and promoting sustainable use of land based resources thus preventing land degradation. However, there are needs for further empowering national and local stakeholders in exploring the effective measures for agroforestry and water harvesting so as to fill the gap between the local needs and provided responses. For these reasons, it was proposed to undertake the subregional study on agroforestry and water harvesting technologies and techniques in the Pacific islands. The following are suggested as focus of the proposed study:

- Evaluating past and ongoing agroforestry and water harvesting technologies and techniques,
- Standardizing the data and data collection procedures,
- Strengthening human and institutional capacities,
- Identifying useful traditional knowledge and advanced technologies,
- Developing a framework for formulating various benchmarks and indicators.

The objectives of the proposed study could include among others such as:

- identification of the countries' common and varying needs for agroforestry, water harvesting and capacity building,
- measures for enhancing cooperation, partnership and awareness, and
- measures for strengthening the capacities of stakeholders.

The activities of the proposed study shall include among others:

- preparing country reports presenting review and analysis of agroforestry, water harvesting, drought mitigating and land degradation control measures, delineating activities and their impacts,
- supporting national focal points/focal technical institutes,
- establishing networks, and
- proposing and identifying mechanisms and frameworks for empowering stakeholders to carry out the proposed activities.

The outcomes of the proposed study shall include among others:

- recommendations and designation of the focal points, technical experts and focal institutions for subregional activities on agroforestry and water harvesting in the South Pacific,
- establishment of the sub-regional network on agroforestry and water harvesting,
- Increased collaboration with the existing Asian TPN2, and
- Enhanced efforts for mobilizing financial resources for the proposed network activities.

4. Formulation and adoption of subregional strategies for mitigating drought and combating land degradation

It was suggested that the formulation of subregional policy instruments would be useful to steer the collective efforts to mitigate drought and combat land degradation. Such a policy instrument can also serve as a manifestation of the Island countries' commitment to these areas and as a basis for promoting subregional collaboration.

5. Subregional level approach to resource mobilization and partnership arrangements

As resource mobilization remains a common challenge for the Pacific island countries undertaking activities to mitigate the effects of drought and combat land degradation through effective agroforestry and water harvesting, it was suggested to synchronize the approach for the resource mobilization at the subregional level. For these purpose, it was deemed useful to utilize the schemes of the subregional technical workshops on project formulations.

6. Collaboration with FAO, SPREP (South Pacific Regional Environment Programme), SPC (Secretariat of the Pacific Community)/Agroforestry Unit, and SOPAC

It was suggested that it would be indispensable to identify the subregional organization or the international organizations as supportive institutions or collaborating bodies. Such bodies should have permanent representation or substantive presence in the sub-region as focal institutions or collaborating partners to support the variety of proposed activities related to mitigating drought and combating land degradation in particular agroforestry and water harvesting.

Annex II

Report
Working Group 2: Exploration of Capacity Building Initiatives for Early Warning Systems and Drought Mitigation

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Participants: Ms. Tania Temata (Cook Islands), M. Paniani (Samoa), Rona Meleisea (Samoa), Ms. Ann Kitalong (Palau), Mr. Dennis Ivarami (Papua New Guinea), Mr. Johnny Koanapo (Vanuatu), Mr. Ivan Linhart (Solomon Islands), Mr. Poni Faavae (Tuvalu), and Mr. Henry K. Taiki (WMO)

Rapporteurs: Mr. Wolf Forstreuter and Mr. Pak Sum Low

. **Introduction**

The participants first exchanged information regarding specific issues and problems related to drought mitigation and land degradation encountered in their countries. These included the lack of financial resources, the lack of technical capacity and technological capacity (e.g., expertise, relevant maps, and equipment, etc.) in various areas to undertake a range of urgent activities that address drought mitigation and land degradation. Drought forecasts and early warning systems are most critical for preparing and planning for drought. The lead time for the prediction of the onset of drought has profound implications for drought preparedness.

The participants emphasized the importance and the need for both short-term and long-term integrated planning and strategies, which must be built on the basis of sustainable land and water resources management. Capacity building that includes education and training is a key issue that needs to be addressed at all levels. Community participation; public awareness; communication, information networking, coordination and dissemination; promotion of indigenous technologies and information, are also important elements that need to be included in these strategies.

The WMO representative provided a brief account of the activities undertaken by WMO. He pointed out that the tropical cyclone warning systems have been established and initiatives have been undertaken in the area of early warning for droughts. The scope of early warning systems needs to be further expanded and strengthened.

The participants used a LogFrame matrix to formulate a project concept, as shown in Table 1 attached, and as briefly described below.

. **Overall Project Goal**

"To reduce the negative social, economic and ecological impacts of drought and land degradation through sustainable land and water management in the Pacific Island Countries."

. **Project Purpose**

The aim of the project is to prepare the stakeholders (governmental and non-governmental organizations, urban and rural communities, landowners, farmers, fisherfolk, etc.) in the Pacific Island Countries for mitigating drought and combating land degradation, so as to achieve the overall goal.

Expected Project Results

In order to prepare stakeholders, five project results were identified:

- Reliable and useable early warning systems through a) user friendly programs b) land use maps c) existence of reliable data and d) appropriate research results
- Adequate monitoring system in place through a) land use maps b) existence of reliable data
- Effective interaction among stakeholders
- Effective collaboration between government and NGOs
- Positive attitude of stakeholders towards sustainable land use

Description of Expected Project Results

The current drought early warning systems in the Pacific Island Countries are inadequate, as the quarterly outputs are not frequent enough, and the presented outputs are not user friendly. In addition, the warnings, which are based on insufficient data, do not relate to the vulnerable parts of the ecosystems.

In order to overcome this shortcoming, drought forecasts should be presented on a monthly basis in a user friendly manner. Forecasts should be related to spatial data such as soil, groundwater and topographical relief so as to indicate the vulnerable/affected areas. Meteorological data and analysis need to be improved for more reliable forecasts.

Land use planning and management are lacking in all Pacific Island Countries. Monitoring is essential to effective planning and management. The current knowledge of the extent of environmental impacts of drought and land degradation is limited. An annually updated GIS based land use map will show changes in agricultural, forested and urban areas and also land degradation. Field data collection will add to the spatial data source.

Currently different stakeholders do not interact with each other. It is essential to convince them of the benefits of overall land use planning. Changes of land use in one area can cause impact land use elsewhere. For example deforestation in water catchments causes flooding of flat coastal areas during cyclones.

NGOs are doing effective work in some Pacific Island Countries. However, the effectiveness can be significantly increased if they interact better with official government bodies. Integration into an overall land use planning is essential.

In many Pacific Island Countries the farmers and forest landowners do not practise sustainable land use. It is essential to promote traditionally and proven sustainable land management practices.

. **Project Activities**

a) To establish improved ***early warning systems***, it is necessary to develop an inventory of the Pacific islands' needs for early warning system. The conditions in the island countries are very different and the specific needs have to be addressed. To relate the drought warnings to spatial data, maps have to be created and therefore GIS/RS units needs to be established or existing units needs to be improved. Furthermore, more meteorological data is needed to ensure more reliable forecasts. Focused research will produce more specific forecasts on the drought impacts on vegetation and other environmental threats. GIS and RS training are required to produce maps. Meteorological related training is necessary to produce and interpret the forecasts.

b) To set up a ***land use monitoring system***, which produce a yearly change detection of the current land use, RS/GIS units need to be established or improved. Annual satellite data need to be purchased, analysed and overlaid onto maps from the previous year in order to visualise and quantify the change in land use and to highlight any land degradation. The yearly change detection map needs to be accompanied by a small report that is easily understood by the stakeholders.

c) To improve the ***interaction of stakeholders*** they need to be part of the land use planning process. Demonstration of proven projects and the production of educational material will be used by the extension service in the countries to educate the stakeholders and promote cooperation. In some countries, extension service in agriculture or forestry needs to be established or improved.

d) To initiate ***interaction between NGOs and government bodies*** memoranda of understanding need to be formulated and signed to increase the effectiveness of NGOs through the existing extension service. Regular networking through village meetings is essential especially with women in order to have effective cooperation.

e) To ***create a positive attitude among farmers and forest landowners towards sustainable land use management,*** education and training is necessary. The information on the long-term benefits has to be transferred to the landowners. The establishment of new extension services or improvement of existing services and training are essential. Again, demonstration of successful projects and educational material is very important, which has to be locally produced. The involvement of land care groups is important and needs to be implemented.

. **Implementation**

A subregional UNCCD focal point within an existing regional body should be identified upon the recommendations of the Council of Regional Organizations in the Pacific (CROP).

PART III

PACIFIC ISLAND SUBREGIONAL WORKSHOP ON INTEGRATION OF PRIORITY ACTIVITIES RELATED TO MITIGATING DROUGHT AND COMBATING LAND DEGRADATION IN THE ACP-EU PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT
Apia, Samoa, 24-25 May 2001

I. PROCEEDINGS OF THE WORKSHOP

The participants heard during the opening ceremony the address of the Hon. Tuisugaletaua A.S. Aveau , Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and & Meteorology of the Governement of Samoa and the speeches of Mr. Hama Arba Diallo, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), of Dr. Pa'o Luteru, Assistant Secretary General of the ACP Group and of Serge Ducasse, Resident Coordinator of the United Nations System.

They elected Mr Aiono Mose Su'a, Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Mr Casten Nemra, Director, International Development Assistance as Co-Chairmen and Mrs. Ann Kitalong, Office of Environmental Response and Coordination, Palau as Rapporteur.

The participants had fruitful exchanges and shared information on the status of preparing and/or submitting ACP-EU Country Support Strategies (CSS) that are due by the end of June 2001. While environmental protection, drought mitigation, land degradation control and sustainable management of land based resources remain key policy objectives in the respective countries, there is still a significant room and need for mobilizing greater political and public support and resources to promote activities in these areas.

The participants shared a view that the preparation and submission of CSSs and National Indicative Programmes (NIPs) are part of the continuous process that consists of different steps and stages. It was felt that taking into account the priority themes and topics that were proposed for the CSSs and NIPs, efforts must be persistently made to mainstream drought mitigation and land degradation control activities in the implementation of ACP-EU partnership agreements.

It was pointed out that the environmental protection is indeed a cross-cutting theme and a subject that is inextricably linked with human development such as health and education. Mutual synergies must be cultivated to enhance complementarity between the efforts made in respective sectors.

Further to the discussions that took place during the precedent UNCCD workshop in Apia, participants discussed various environmental threats and sustainable development policies. For instance, logging management was said to be a common policy agenda for Pacific Island countries that is of relevance in the UNCCD context. It was suggested to closely look into the components or sub-components of the focal areas of the CSS so as to identify concrete areas where measures to mitigate drought and combat land degradation could be accommodated as part of project implementation areas.

In the CSS formulation process, the Pacific Island countries have emphasized the bottom-up approach that coincides with the CCD principle. They took note that the organization of national forum in the UNCCD process elsewhere has served as a framework for involving a wide range of stakeholders. The forum also serves as a leverage to raise the public awareness, political support and to mainstream drought mitigation, land degradation control and sustainable management of land-based resources in the national policy agenda.

It was reported that the preparation of land use inventories was proposed for the CSS. Such a work could be led to promote land use and vegetation cover monitoring and develop remote sensing schemes so as to enhance the capacities for land use and environmental management planning.

Participants expressed their thanks to the Government of Samoa and to the UNCCD and ACP Secretariats for the organisation of this meeting that brought a needed focus on land degradation and drought issues in Pacific Island countries.

II. CONCLUSIONS OF THE WORKSHOP

The Participants of the South Pacific Sub-Regional Workshop on the Integration of Priority Activities related to Mitigating Drought and Combating Land Degradation, Including National Authorizing Officers and the UNCCD Focal Points,

Having carefully reviewed the provisions of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement (referred to as the "Cotonou Agreement") and of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and having found significant areas of convergence between their advocated strategies,

Mindful of the need to facilitate the timely and cost effective implementation of the Cotonou Agreement as a critically important multilateral instrument for poverty eradication,

Recalling the Declaration on Commitment adopted by the Parties of the UNCCD at the 4th Conference of the Parties held in Bonn in December 2000,

Further recalling that the eradication of poverty is the core objective of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement as well as a guiding principle throughout the provisions of the UNCCD,

Recognizing the need to mainstream environmental concerns through synergies and dialogue at all levels within the range of these two instruments that are complementary sustainable development tools for the benefit of Parties,

have formulated the following recommendations:

A. Measures to be taken at national level

- Country Parties are invited to launch the process of elaboration and adoption of priority measures and/or to formulate their NAP, with the view to finalising them before the end of 2005. (See decision 8/COP.4).

- The UNCCD focal points are encouraged to approach the National Authorising Officers (NAOs) to ensure the inclusion of priority measures, including the elements

of their future NAPs, into the Country Support Strategies (CSS) and subsequently into the National Indicative Programmes (NIPs). Given the fact that the NIP represents a rolling programming process, such elements can be further included during the mid term and end term review of the NIP.

- To ensure that priority measures and/or NAPs are included in the CSS, the UNCCD National Focal Points are required to maintain an extensive dialogue with decision making officers of concerned ministries, the NAO and the European Community Heads of Delegation based in the country or the region. They should emphasise the relevance of integrating the priority programmes in combating land degradation and mitigating drought in the CSS and the NIPs.

- The participants are urged to fully brief, as appropriate, the respective NAO under whose portfolio falls the development of the CSS, and provide information on the two UNCCD workshops held in Apia and on the priority measures and projects to be included under the CSS.

- Since UNCCD related measures and future NAPs represent governmental priorities to discharge obligations under a multilateral environmental agreement, the concerned Ministries, mainly those of Agriculture, Environment, Economic Planning and Finance should jointly advocate these issues in the appropriate national forums. The resulting exchanges will facilitate a convergent dialogue and inclusion of pertinent activities in the NIPs.

- The UNCCD National Focal Point should study the CSS documents already submitted and formulate proposals for NAP action to be reflected in the selected focal areas or in an appropriate non-focal area. The focal point then should present this initiative to the National Authorising Officer for review, exchanges and inclusion into the NIP.

- The UNCCD National Focal Point in collaboration with the NAO should receive some catalytic support to formulate such activities, disseminate information and raise awareness with concerned stakeholders on the need to include the UNCCD priorities in the finalised National Indicative Programme.

- The UNCCD National Focal Point, in collaboration with the NAO, are invited to call for a joint dialogue among the EU Member States, ESCAP, UNDP, FAO, WMO and the European Union Heads of Delegation. Consultations should facilitate inclusion of pertinent priority measures and/or of the NAPs on an ongoing basis, bearing in mind that, under the Cotonou Agreement progress in the implementation of the NIP is systematically reviewed.

- The UNCCD National Focal Points, while developing proposals, is urged to facilitate synergies with measures delivering obligations under the two related UN Conventions on Climate Change and Biodiversity, taking into account their interrelated nature.

- The UNCCD National Focal Point in collaboration with the NAO may, by utilising Article 71 of the Cotonou Agreement, which supports decentralised co-operation programmes, directly send in programme proposals to the European Community Head of Delegation for funding. It is important to note that the proposals are not necessarily required to fit into the sectoral priorities of the NIP, they can also venture into areas that are a priority for the NAP.

· The specific sectors of NAPs which strongly emphasise awareness raising and capacity building could benefit from the European Community budget line of decentralised co-operation which aims to provide strategic funding to strengthen programmes of the civil society organisations such as NGOs and CBOs.

· The NAOs, acknowledging that the European Community is a Party to the UNCCD, should take a proactive role in developing, together with the UNCCD focal point, proposals that ensure the allocation of adequate resources for the sustainable use of land based natural resources, while securing the active participation of civil society stake holders in UNCCD projects.

A. Measures to be taken at Subregional and Regional levels

· It was agreed that options at the national and regional levels should be reviewed in an integrated manner. SPREP is being requested to coordinate the elaboration and implementation of activities relevant under the UNCCD. It is encouraged to work closely with NAO and relevant sub-regional institutions in formulating priority activities that can be included in the RSS/ RIP, in accordance with the provisions of the Cotonou Agreement.

· NAOs should consider as a matter of urgency, proposals forwarded at the Pacific Island Sub-Regional Workshop on Mitigating Drought & Combating Land Degradation, held in Apia from 21 to 25 May 2001., and at this Workshop held in the context of the implementation of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement. They are requested to support the formulation of projects for support under the RSS that will be finalised at the forthcoming NAO-RAO Regional meeting, tentatively planned in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, on 2nd July 2001.

· Subregional and regional civil society organizations dealing with land degradation, should, to all extent possible, be associated to the consultative process of elaborating and implementing the Regional Supports Strategies (RSS).

· Subregional institutions, such as SPREP, could initiate awareness and capacity building programmes on trade and environment issues, in order to assist member states to articulate their positions in the impending EU-ACP trade negotiations in line with Articles 48 and 49 of the Cotonou Agreement.

B. Measures to be taken at the International Level

· The European Union Heads of Delegation, on behalf of the European Commission, which is a Party to the UNCCD, are called upon to provide capacity building support to the UNCCD focal points. They should endeavour to facilitate efforts at national, subregional and regional levels aimed at identifying possible areas of cooperation.

· While the International Community is called upon to further facilitate the speedy opening of a GEF window for land degradation related activities, the Resident Co-ordinators of the United Nations are urged to assist affected countries in the preparation of related programme development frameworks.

C. Measures to be taken by the UNCCD and the ACP Secretariats

- The UNCCD and the ACP Secretariats should disseminate the conclusions of the two Apia workshops and facilitate, upon request by the ACP Country Parties concerned, the process of accessing EDF resources through the National Indicative Programmes and other instruments.

- The Secretariats are also invited to pursue consultations with the SPREP and Forum Secretariat to ensure that the advocated process of policy and programme convergence can take hold at the subregional level to reflect the interests of all member States concerned.

- The Secretariats are called upon to follow up on the required actions at the national level through the provisions of the requisite support to enable countries to elaborate their CSS and NIPs taking fully into account the recommendations above.

- As far as sub regional activities are concerned, both Secretariats are invited to closely cooperate with SPREP and the Forum Secretariat to facilitate, as appropriate, the necessary and timely follow-up towards the preparation and subsequent review of the RSS and RIPs.

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